

Memorandum

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To: City of Sugar Land
Riverstone Connection Study Strategic Team

From: Manu Isaac, P.E.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

Date: 2/14/13

Subject: Riverstone Connection Study - Task Force Meeting #2
Meeting Summary

Meeting Purpose

The first task force meeting for the Riverstone Connection Study on December 20, 2012 identified the neighborhood goals and interests. Based on input received from task force members the Consultant developed several options to achieve the desired goals conveyed by members, and still meet the functionality of the Riverstone connection. Hence the purpose of the second task force meeting held at 5:30 pm on January 29, 2013, at Sugar Land City Hall was to share the options developed and obtain feedback.

Attendees:

Task Force Members:

1. Debby Coffman – Lakes of Austin Park
2. Doug Earle – First Colony Community Assoc. (FCCA)
3. Dave Kinzelman – Commonwealth
4. Virginia Mack – Commonwealth
5. Vivian Moseley – Sweetwater-Section 6
6. John Niemand – Sweetwater
7. Michael Pawlowski – Colony Woods
8. Tom Wilcox - Riverstone
9. Tom Wooley – Commonwealth Park

City of Sugar Land Elected Official:

1. Harish Jajoo, P.E., CFM – City Council Member - District 4

City of Sugar Land Staff Members:

1. Chris Steubing, P.E. – City Engineer (Project Manager)
2. Pat Walsh, P.E. - Director of Transportation & Long-Range Planning
3. Andrew Yee – Engineer I
4. Lisa Kocich-Meyer, AICP – Principal Planner

5. Doug Schomburg, AICP – Director Planning & Environmental Services
6. Cathy Halka, AICP – Senior Planner

Consultant Team:

1. Manu Isaac, P.E. – Consultant Project Manager
2. Joe Willhite, AICP - Planner
3. Ryan Eurek, EIT

Meeting Summary:

The City's Project Manager provided a brief introduction and acknowledged the participation from task force members. A powerpoint presentation by the Consultant team provided a synopsis of Task Force Meeting #1, information from utility and property research, introduced various connection options, presented initial model results, conveyed alternate intersection and roadway treatments, shared an evaluation matrix of various connection options, and required feedback details.

The meeting focused on conveying the following:

1. Advantages and Disadvantages of each Connection Option
2. Various Intersection and Roadway Treatments
3. Study Process and Task Force Objectives

The presentation helped facilitate a discussion among Task Force members about the advantages and disadvantage of each option. Throughout the presentation and periodic open-forum discussion, both the City and Consultant obtained feedback from Task Force members.

The Consultant mentioned that the HGAC models show the relative placement of Riverstone connection would have an impact on the amount of traffic utilizing Palm Royale as a viable route. Model results indicate that a connection north of Palm Royale is not likely to contribute any additional traffic volume, while a connection either at Palm Royale or south significantly increases the projected traffic due to future development.

Schematic intersection layouts and simulation video, allowed Task Force members to visualize different intersection configurations and future traffic operations with projected volumes.

At the end of meeting, comment cards were provided to Task Force members to provide feedback regarding the viable options presented. City staff would also try to meet with Task Force members that were unable to attend Meeting #2 to share the information conveyed and obtain feedback.

Connection Options:

Seven connection options were presented, of which four are considered viable options and the other three were shown to have fatal flaws.

Four Viable Options

1. **Option #2** provides a connection approximately 1,000 feet north of Palm Royale. Impact to Palm Royale is minimal. It has some drainage implications and crosses the Centerpoint ROW diagonally which is not preferable.
2. **Option #3** provides a connection approximately 600 feet north of Palm Royale. Impact to Palm Royale is minimal.
3. **Option #4** provides a connection at Palm Royale forming a standard 4-legged intersection. May require a skewed intersection configuration due to Centerpoint towers. Traffic flow on Palm Royale is projected to increase significantly.
4. **Option #5** provides a connection approximately 600 feet south of Palm Royale. Traffic on Palm Royale is projected to increase significantly.

Options with Fatal Flaws

1. **Option #1** has several fatal flaws which include high impact to existing neighborhoods, increased noise, excessive cost, and higher maintenance.
2. **Option #6** and **Option #7** do not improve the overall mobility of the study area. Also, both these options are unlikely to satisfy the Connection requirements as stated in the Riverstone agreement.

Meeting Discussion:

1. The new section of University Boulevard will provide an alternate route for Sugar Land residents wanting to access US 59 without traversing through the middle of neighborhoods.
2. Signalized intersections require a recommended minimum distance of at least quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) of a mile between intersections to provide reasonable traffic operations and coordination. Roundabouts can be spaced much closer depending on the needs of roadway without negative impacts to traffic operations and/or safety.
3. Roundabout can be a viable configuration for the future connection. Based on preliminary sketches provided by the project team, the configuration can fit within the available ROW for roadway/intersection construction. Project team reminded Task Force members that proposed intersection cannot encroach onto CenterPoint Energy property.
4. Visual enhancements are typically added in the center of roundabouts which may include water fountains, artwork, and plants.
5. City of Sugar Land is currently developing roundabout design standards. Included in the standards are details for "lay-down curb." This curb deters drivers in regular passenger vehicles from driving over it, but is easily negotiated by fire trucks and other emergency vehicles.
6. While a two-lane roundabout is recommended for the projected 2035 volumes, a single-lane roundabout would suffice for the short term.

7. Some Task Force members had concern that not all members were present at this meeting. City staff told the group about possibly meeting absentee members individually to convey meeting summary, so that all representative community group's input can be considered.

General Feedback from Task Force members:

1. Appreciated the design consideration and enhanced traffic operations of a roundabout. Positive feedback about the ability of a roundabout to address some of the member concerns during Task Force Meeting #1.
 - Speed reduction
 - Maintain aesthetics
 - Reduce number of traffic signals
2. Majority of members present were of the opinion that Connection Option #3 was more preferable, followed by Option #2. Connections north of Palm Royale were attractive as it limited the possibility of additional traffic on Palm Royale. These options also provided appropriate connectivity and access for future Sugar Land residents.